

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY S/S-O: BELL

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 035915

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. ITALY: COMMUNISTS IN NO-LOSE POSITION

EMBASSY ROME REPORTS THAT THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY HAS
CRITICIZED MORO'S FORMATION OF AN ALL-DC GOVERNMENT. THE
PCI STATEMENT CHARGED THAT:

--REVELATIONS OF AMERICAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO VARIOUS
POLITICAL PARTIES AND POLITICIANS "SERIOUSLY AGGRA-
VATED" THE SITUATION.

--A NEW GOVERNMENT COMPOSED ONLY OF CHRISTIAN DEMO-
CRATS IS NOT HEALTHY FOR THE COUNTRY.

--THE ONLY REAL SOLUTION WOULD BE A GOVERNMENT OF ALL
DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL FORCES, INCLUDING THE PCI.

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EMBASSY COMMENT: THE PCI JUDGMENT ABOUT THE ALL-DC GOVERNMENT IS ESSENTIALLY CRITICAL, BUT NOT ENTIRELY NEGATIVE. AT THE VERY LEAST, ELECTIONS HAVE BEEN DEFERRED. FURTHER-

MORE, THE PCI SEES AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE AND EVEN EXPAND THE INFORMAL CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS IT HAD WITH THE LAST GOVERNMENT ON THE FORMATION OF LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMS. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) ROME 2284, 2/12.)

2. FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS--GROWLS FROM MOSCOW

IN A SPEECH TO SOVIET SYMPATHIZERS THE USSR'S REPRESENTATIVE AT THE PCF CONGRESS HARDLY MENTIONED THE PCF'S DROPPING OF THE CONCEPT OF THE "DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT." HE INSTEAD EMPHASIZED THAT:

--PFC LEADER MARCHAIS' RECENT ADOPTION OF SELECTED HUMANITARIAN CAUSES IN THE USSR IS A MORE SERIOUS MATTER; AND

--WHAT MOSCOW CONSIDERS MOST OFFENSIVE IS AN ANTI-SOVIET STRAIN IN THE PCF'S NEW LINE.

EMBASSY COMMENT: DESPITE SOVIET IRRITATION WITH MARCHAIS WE EXPECT THEY WILL CALIBRATE THEIR FUTURE ATTITUDE TOWARD MARCHAIS CONSIDERING BOTH HIS STATEMENTS AND HIS ACTUAL CHANCES OF PARTICIPATING IN POWER. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) PARIS 4339, 2/12.)

3. SAHARA

A. EGYPTIAN EFFORTS

THE EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR IN RABAT HAS BRIEFED AMBASSADOR NEUMANN ON GOE MEDIATION EFFORTS ON THE SAHARA.

--EGYPTIAN VICE PRESIDENT MUBARAK FOUND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE ALGERIANS BECAUSE OF DISARRAY WITHIN THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL.

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--A MOROCCAN-ALGERIAN MILITARY CONFRONTATION IS INDEED POSSIBLE, BUT THE ALGERIANS COULD NOT EXPECT TO WIN.

B. MAHBES OFFICIALLY OCCUPIED

AFTER SEVERAL DAYS OF CONFLICTING REPORTS, THE GOM OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED FEBRUARY 12 THAT MAHBES IN THE EASTERN SAHARA WAS ENTIRELY CONTROLLED BY MOROCCAN FORCES. (CONFIDENTIAL)

RABAT 793 AND 797, 2/12.)

4. BENIN-US "DIPLOMATIC" RELATIONS

AMBASSADOR ENGLE RECEIVED "BARBARIC TREATMENT" FROM BENIN PRESIDENT KEREKOU WHEN SUMMONED TO THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE FEBRUARY 12. AFTER AN INSULTING RECEPTION, THE AMBASSADOR WAS PEREMPTORILY DISMISSED FROM THE MEETING.

--FOREIGN MINISTER ALLADAYE THEREAFTER ARRANGED A "CONFRONTATION" WITH A KANGAROO COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY, WHICH TRIED TO ESTABLISH THE AMBASSADOR'S INCOMPE- TENCE AND DISHONESTY.

--THE AMBASSADOR FEELS HE "WON" WHATEVER INTELLECTUAL EXCHANGE THERE WAS.

AMBASSADOR'S COMMENT: MY INCREDIBLE ADVENTURES OF FEBRU- ARY 12 MUST SURELY BE COUNTED AMONG THE MOST OUTRAGEOUS EXPERIENCES ANY AMERICAN CHIEF OF MISSION HAS EVER UNDER- GONE AT THE HANDS OF THE TOP LEADERSHIP OF ANY GOVERNMENT. IT IS REASONABLE AND PROPER AT THIS POINT FOR THE USG TO CONSIDER WHETHER WE SHOULD REMAIN AT ALL IN BENIN. (CON- FIDENTIAL) COTONOU 256 AND 253, 2/12.) INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MORNING SUMMARY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE035915
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: O: BELL
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760055-0488
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760249/aaaabqwy.tel
Line Count: 139
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SSO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GarlanWA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 APR 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <16 APR 2004 by GarlanWA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, PINT, PBOR, MOPS, PDIP, IT, FR, SS, XI, EG, DM, US
To: NSA MULTIPLE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006